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Psychology: Adding Labs to PSH 301 and PSH 322

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SUNY BROCKPORT

College Senate
State University of New York College at Brockport
350 New Campus Drive
Brockport, NY 14420-2925
(516) 395-2586 (Fax) 395-2246

Resolution # 37 2005-2006 COLLEGE SENATE

TO: Dr. John R. Halstead, College President

FROM: The College Senate passed: May 8, 2006

RE: ☒ I. Formal Resolution (*Act of Determination*)
II. Recommendation (*Urging the Fitness of*)
III. Other, For Your Information (*Notice, Request, Report, etc.*)



SUBJ: **Psychology: Adding Labs to PSH 301 and PSH 322** #24 05-06 UC

Signed: [Signature]
(Dr. Mark Noll, 2005-2006 College Senate President)

Date: 5/18/06

Please fill out the bottom portion and return document to the College Senate Office.

TO: The College Senate

FROM: College President

RE: ☒ I. Decision and Action Taken on Formal Resolution (circle)
a. Accepted. Resolution Effective Date: 5/22/06
b. Deferred for discussion with the Faculty Senate on ____/____/____
c. Unacceptable for the reasons contained in the attached explanation

II, III. Response to Recommendation or Other/FYI
a. Received and acknowledged ____/____/____
b. Comment: _____

DISTRIBUTED BY PRESIDENT'S OFFICE TO: President's Cabinet

DISTRIBUTE ALSO TO: Originator, Academic Advisement, Registrar (as appropriate)

Signed: [Signature]
(Dr. John R. Halstead, College President, SUNY College at Brockport)

Date: 5/22/06

**COLLEGE SENATE OFFICE
RESOLUTION PROPOSAL COVER
PAGE**

**Routing
Number** **#24 05-06 UC**

ROUTING NUMBER TO BE ASSIGNED BY SENATE OFFICE

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS: FEBRUARY 23

Proposals received after the deadline may not be reviewed until next semester.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Submit proposals individually rather than packets with multiple documents.
- Complete this cover page for each proposal (available online at www.brockport.edu/collegesenate)
- Prepare proposal in Word format using committee guidelines (available online)
- Submit proposal electronically with this cover page to senate@brockport.edu,
facprez@brockport.edu
- All updates must be resubmitted to the Senate office with an updated cover page, use routing number
- Questions? Call the Senate office at 395-2586 or the appropriate committee chairperson.

1. PROPOSAL TITLE:

Please be somewhat descriptive, for example, *Graduate Probation/Dismissal Proposal* rather than *Graduate Proposal*.

Adding Labs to Two Psychology Courses (PSH 301 and PSH 322)

2. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:

It is proposed that both PSH 301 (Research Methods in Psychology) and PSH 322 (Conditioning and Learning) be modified as follows: PSH 301 will have a two-hour weekly laboratory experience added, and the number of credits awarded for this course will be increased from three to four. PSH 322 will have a three-hour/week laboratory experience added, and the number of credits awarded for this course will be increased from three to four.

3. SUBMISSION & REVISION DATES: PLEASE DATE ALL UPDATED DOCUMENTS

First Submission	Updated on	Updated on	Updated on
December 16, 2005	February 15, 2006	February 22, 2006	February 23, 2006
	April 17, 2006		

4. SUBMITTED BY: (contact person)

Name	Department	Phone	Email
R. J. Miller, Chair	Psychology	395-2488	rjmiller@brockport.edu

5. COMMITTEES TO COPY: (Senate office use only)

Standing Committee	Forwarded To	Date
___ Enrollment Planning & Policies ___ Faculty & Professional Staff Policies ___ General Education & Curriculum Policies ___ Graduate Curriculum & Policies ___ Student Policies xx Undergraduate Curriculum & Policies	Committee Chair	12/12/05, 2/15/06, 2/22/06, 3/2/06, 4/17/06
	Executive Committee	3/6/06, 4/10/06, 4/24/06
	Senate Floor	5/8/06
	College President	
	Other	

*(ROUTING NUMBER WILL BE A CHRONOLOGICAL NUMBER SEQUENCE FOLLOWED BY COMMITTEE INITIALS)

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2. Side-by-side comparisons of old and new programs

Psychology Major

Current Major in Psychology	Credits	Proposed Major in Psychology	Credits
<i>Core: Required of all Majors</i>		<i>Core: Required of all Majors</i>	
PSH 110 Principles of Psychology	3	PSH 110 Principles of Psychology	3
<i>or</i>		<i>or</i>	
PSH 112 General Psychology with Laboratory	4	PSH 112 General Psychology with Laboratory	4
PSH 202 Introductory Statistics for Psychology	3	PSH 202 Introductory Statistics for Psychology	3
PSH 301 Research Methods in Psychology	3	PSH 301 Research Methods in Psychology	4*
	<hr/> 9-10		<hr/> 10-11
<i>Group I: At least one course required</i>		<i>Group I: At least one course required</i>	
PSH 341 Biopsychology	3	PSH 341 Biopsychology	3
PSH 342 Animal Behavior	3	PSH 342 Animal Behavior	3
PSH 352 Sensation/Perception	3	PSH 352 Sensation/Perception	3
	<hr/> 3		<hr/> 3
<i>Group II: At least one course required</i>		<i>Group II: At least one course required</i>	
PSH 331 Personality	3	PSH 331 Personality	3
PSH 332 Social Psychology	3	PSH 332 Social Psychology	3
PSH 384 Child Psychology	3	PSH 384 Child Psychology	3
	<hr/> 3		<hr/> 3
<i>Group III: At least one course required</i>		<i>Group III: At least one course required</i>	
PSH 334 Abnormal Psychology	3	PSH 334 Abnormal Psychology	3
PSH 336 Clinical Psychology	3	PSH 336 Clinical Psychology	3
PSH 397 Health Psychology	3	PSH 397 Health Psychology	3
	<hr/> 3		<hr/> 3

<i>Group IV: At least one course required</i>		<i>Group IV: At least one course required</i>	
PSH 322 Conditioning and Learning	3	PSH 322 Conditioning and Learning	4
PSH 325 Motivation	3	PSH 325 Motivation	3
PSH 351 Cognitive Processes	3	PSH 351 Cognitive Processes	3
	<hr/> 3		<hr/> 3-4
<i>Group V: Psychology electives</i>		<i>Group V: Psychology electives</i>	
Additional five (letter-graded) psychology courses	15	Additional five (letter-graded) psychology courses	15
Total Credits	36-37	Total Credits	37-39**

*If a student transfers to SUNY Brockport from another institution, having taken a psychology methods course at that previous institution, that course will *not* transfer as PSH 301 unless it was a 4-credit course with laboratory. This will rarely be an issue, as very few students come to SUNY Brockport having taken a psychology methods course previously.

In those cases where a student carries a dual major (e.g., Criminal Justice and Psychology), the requirement that he/she take PSH 301 will normally be waived (with permission) if he/she successfully completes a comparable methods course in the other (i.e., non-Psychology) major (e.g., CRJ 471). However, such students still will be required to complete at least 36 letter-graded credits in Psychology courses.

**To obtain 37-39 Psychology credits, a student normally would have to complete at least 12 courses, including Psychology courses transferred from other institutions. Since it is possible for a student to complete 12 courses, but receive only a total of 36 credits (which would be the case, for example, if a transfer student or dual major had PSH 301 waived, received credit for PSH 110 instead of PSH 112, and elected not to take PSH 322), the total minimum number of Psychology credits needed to complete the major will remain at its current 36. In the majority of cases, however, it is expected that Psychology majors will complete at least 37 credits.

Psychology *Minor*

Current Minor in Psychology	Credits	Proposed Minor in Psychology	Credits
<i>Core: Required of all Minors</i>		<i>Core: Required of all Minors</i>	
PSH 110 Principles of Psychology	3	PSH 110 Principles of Psychology	3
<i>or</i>		<i>or</i>	
PSH 112 General Psychology with Laboratory	4	PSH 112 General Psychology with Laboratory	4
PSH 202 Introductory Statistics for Psychology	3	PSH 202 Introductory Statistics for Psychology	3
PSH 301 Research Methods in Psychology	3	PSH 301 Research Methods in Psychology	4*
	9-10		10-11
<i>Psychology electives</i>		<i>Psychology electives</i>	
Additional three (letter-graded) psychology courses	9	Additional three (letter-graded) psychology courses	9
Total Credits	18-19	Total Credits	19-20**

*If a student transfers to SUNY Brockport from another institution, having taken a psychology methods course at that previous institution, that course will *not* transfer as PSH 301 unless it was a 4-credit course with laboratory. This will rarely be an issue, as very few students come to SUNY Brockport having taken a psychology methods course previously.

In those cases where a student successfully completes a comparable methods course in another department (e.g., CRJ 471), the requirement to take PSH 301 generally will be waived (with permission). However, such students still will be required to complete at least 18 letter-graded credits in Psychology courses.

**To obtain 19-20 Psychology credits, a student normally would have to complete at least six courses, including Psychology courses transferred from other institutions. Since it is possible for a student to complete six courses, but receive only a total of 18 credits (which would be the case, for example, if a student had PSH 301 waived, received credit for PSH 110 instead of PSH 112, and did not take PSH 322), the total minimum number of Psychology credits needed to complete the minor will remain at its current 18.

3. Rationale for changes

We are proposing significant changes in two of our courses, PSH 301 (Research Methods in Psychology), and PSH 322 (Conditioning and Learning). These are not new courses. They already are in the Catalog and have been an important part of our curriculum for years. However, we would like to make significant modifications in their formats.

PSH 301: Research Methods in Psychology

We propose that PSH 301: Research Methods in Psychology be changed in format and number of credits.

We would like to add a formal two-hour per week laboratory meeting to this course. This lab session would be in addition to the current three hours per week of classroom instruction. That is, each student who enrolls in the course will attend three hours per week of classroom lecture, plus a two-hour per week laboratory meeting.

Along with the addition of the formal two-hour weekly lab meeting, we propose that the number of credits for the course be increased from three to four.

Research Methods is a course in the theory and practice of research in psychology. The addition of a formal laboratory experience, which would include hands-on experience with a variety of research techniques as well as extensive research report writing in APA format, will seriously enrich the quality of the students' learning experience (just as it does when this format is applied in chemistry, physics, biological science, etc.). While specific details of laboratory exercises are still being worked out (and will inevitably vary somewhat from instructor to instructor), the students' experiences will include:

- (1) Conducting on-line and in-library literature searches, finding research articles, and exercises in reading and evaluating such research reports.
- (2) Conducting computer data analyses (including learning the use of standard data packages like SPSS), assembling data in spreadsheets, and planning experiments in such a way as to maximize the value of available analysis protocols.
- (3) Developing ideas for experiments (as well as quasi-experiments and other approaches), including the design and conduct of the students' own experiments as well as "canned" experiments provided by instructors.
- (4) Solving apparatus and materials problems, and learning how to measure relevant research variables.
- (5) Gathering data from human participants, including rigorous grounding in the ethics of research with human (and nonhuman) participants.
- (6) Conducting analyses of real data, including making decisions as to what constitute appropriate analyses for various different types of data sets.
- (7) Writing journal-quality research reports in strict APA style.

Many colleges and universities include a formal laboratory experience as part of their basic psychology methods course, so we would be consistent with a well-established precedent. Furthermore, the addition of a formal laboratory component (especially one with significant computer applications) was among the recommendations made by external reviewers in our most recent periodic program review.

The faculty of the Psychology Department believe a two-hour lab is appropriate, sufficient, consistent with what other institutions do with their psychology methods labs, and worth the fourth credit. All students will be doing a considerable amount of work outside of the formal lab meeting time for their lab projects (e.g., doing public behavior observations, collecting data, conducting statistical analyses, writing research reports, doing library searches, designing their own experiments, writing IRB proposals, taking on-line CITI training, practicing new

computer skills, etc.), and the total effort each student will be required to put into the laboratory portion of the course will, in our opinion, fully justify making the course a 4-credit course.

Furthermore, labs with meeting times less than 3.0 hours are by no means rare on our campus. The following is a sample of 4-credit courses currently being offered at SUNY Brockport that include labs of less than 3 hours duration.

<u>Course</u>	<u>Duration (Hrs.)</u>
BIO 111	2.25
Bio 221	2.00
CHM 121	2.00
CHM 260	2.00
CSC 203	2.00
CSC 205	2.00
CSC 311	2.00
CSC 406	2.00
ESC 211	2.75
ESC 420	2.75
ENV 111	2.25
ENV 202	2.25
GEL 302	2.75
GEL 457	2.75
MSC 302	2.00
MSC 402	2.00

PSH 322: Conditioning and Learning

We propose that PSH 322 (Conditioning and Learning) be changed in format and number of credits.

a. We would like to add a three-hour per week laboratory component to this course. The course will meet on Monday, Wednesday and Friday for two hours a day. One hour each day will be spent in the classroom covering the material for the course. The other hour each day will be spent in the laboratory, training and testing laboratory rats supplied for this course. Students will conduct two or three studies using these animals each semester. They will be required to write a brief manuscript (in APA style) on each study. Students also will be required to write a research proposal for a study that can be conducted in class. We expect that we will have 12 work stations and students will work in pairs for a total enrollment of 24 students. All lab work will be supervised by the course instructor, with some assistance from a graduate student teaching assistant. This course format will allow students to see and apply, firsthand, many of the principles of conditioning and learning. It also will provide students with an opportunity to write and to conduct research utilizing animal subjects (an opportunity lacking at many other institutions).

An example of the kind of project that might be done would be to assess the ability of rats to discriminate different types of music. Students would first train rats to press a lever using shaping techniques. They would then place the rats on a variable schedule of reinforcement for lever pressing. The next phase would be to present a type of music to the rats (heavy metal for example) and continue to reinforce the rats for pressing the lever. Intermittently, another type of music would be presented (classical) and the rats would not be reinforced for lever pressing. Once the rats learn the discrimination, two new types of music might be presented intermittently (e.g., easy listening and country) and the rate of responding and extinction could be measured and compared for each.

c. Consistent with the addition of the formal lab meetings, we propose that the number of credits for the course be increased from three to four.

5. Staffing issues

PSH 301: Research Methods in Psychology

We currently offer 3-4 sections of PSH 301 every semester, each section limited to 25 students. That will not change for the foreseeable future. With the addition of a formal lab, however, the amount of faculty time required to teach the course will increase. We have considered using graduate teaching assistants to cover the labs, but the faculty are convinced that the level of expertise required to do an adequate job with these labs exceeds that of the typical graduate students in our program. In the final analysis, the net result of adding the labs would be an additional eight contact hours per semester (two hours per week for each of four sections). This is roughly equivalent to 2-3 sections of additional faculty assignment.

Necessary redistributions of faculty loads in a large department are always complicated, and we are considering several options. However, one source of additional faculty teaching time will be changes we expect to make in our method for offering introductory psychology courses. As currently offered, PSH 110 and PSH 112 (our introductory psychology courses) are equivalent in content, except that included in PSH 112 is a weekly lab meeting. Thus, PSH 110 is offered for three credits and PSH 112 for four credits. We offer 300 seats every semester, 150 in three sections of PSH 110 and 150 in six sections (actually, one large lecture section and six smaller lab sections) of PSH 112. However, our last periodic program review produced the recommendation from external reviewers and from the Academic Priorities Committee of SUNY Brockport that we streamline our introductory course offerings in order to liberate resources for other courses. In response to these recommendations, beginning fall semester 2006 we will no longer offer PSH 112. Rather, the 300 seats of introductory psychology we offer will be divided among two large sections of PSH 110. Thus, instead of having to cover four sections per semester (i.e., three sections of PSH 110 and one large section of PSH 112) with faculty (the PSH 112 labs have been run by graduate student teaching assistants), we will have to cover only two sections of PSH 110 (with some help from graduate teaching assistants) with faculty. This will free up at least two sections that will be available for covering PSH 301.

PSH 322: Conditioning and Learning

The faculty member who will be teaching this course, Dr. John Chelonis, is willing to teach the labs as part of his regular assignment to the course. His only request is that we provide some graduate student teaching assistance, and we will be able to do that. The two graduate teaching assistantships we have will be divided between PSH 110 and PSH 322. Thus, adding the lab to PSH 322 will require no additional staff.

7. Resources and facilities needed to implement changes

PSH 301: Research Methods in Psychology

In order to offer the proposed laboratory component for this course, it will be necessary to have sufficient computers for about 25 students. It will not be necessary to have one computer for each student. Indeed most of the projects we will be doing will function best if teams of two or three students work together on them. We have recently purchased eight new computers for this purpose with money provided by Stuart Appelle, Dean of Letters and Sciences. The computers are housed in a series of small cubicles that already are part of room 112 Holmes Hall, a space that is assigned specifically to the Psychology Department. These cubicles are part of a suite that was originally constructed for just this sort of application when the building was built. Adjoining room 112 Holmes, and connected to it via a door, is a small classroom, room 114. This classroom seats about 25-30 students, and was originally constructed as part of the 112-114 research suite. It is ideal for conducting laboratory meetings for this course. While room 114 is not currently specifically assigned to the Psychology Department, and is used as a general classroom, we will request it specifically for assignment to this course at

the times when labs are meeting. In brief, then, all the resources and facilities needed to implement changes in this course already are in place.

PSH 322: Conditioning and Learning

The animal breeding colony, appropriate facilities and spaces for the care and maintenance of necessary laboratory rats, and a teaching laboratory with necessary conditioning apparatus (i.e., Skinner boxes), are all currently available in Holmes 111. The Psychology Department supports the animal colony as part of its regular budget. We also have a half-time laboratory technician who takes care of all the animals. Some additional apparatus (PVC mazes for conducting conditioning demonstrations with laboratory rats) are currently under construction and will be ready for use by fall semester 2006. All lab meetings will be in this environment. Regular class meetings for the lecture portion of the course can be held in any classroom in Holmes (as is currently the case). In brief, then, all resources and facilities needed to implement changes in this course are already in place or will be by fall 2006.

**Addendum to Senate Proposal to Add
Laboratories to PSH 301 and PSH 322
(Proposal #24 05-06 UC)**

Given the fact that **PSH 301** will, under this proposal, become a 4-credit course with laboratory, certain past practices will change. One practice has been accepting 3-credit psychology methods courses from other institutions as equivalent to PSH 301. Another has been waiving the PSH 301 requirement for students with minors or a second major in psychology who have taken other methods courses in their (first) major. The following practices are proposed:

1. Three-credit psychology methods courses taken at other institutions will transfer as 300-level psychology electives. Relevant articulation agreements will be modified accordingly. It should be emphasized that transfer students only rarely come to SUNY Brockport having taken a psychology methods course elsewhere.
2. Four-credit psychology methods courses (with lab) taken at other institutions will transfer as equivalent to PSH 301.
3. All psychology majors must complete PSH 301 or an equivalent 4-credit psychology methods course (with lab) from another institution. This will be true whether or not psychology is their first major. Methods courses from other SUNY Brockport departments no longer will result in waiver of the PSH 301 requirement for psychology majors.
4. For psychology minors, the requirement that they must take PSH 301 generally will be waived if they have completed an approved methods course in their major, or if they have completed a 3-credit psychology methods course at another institution. The specific list of courses that are acceptable for this purpose will be reevaluated in the near future, and the list of approved courses will be made widely available. All such waivers will, however, require the signature of the Psychology Department chair or his/her representative. This waiver only will apply as long as the student is a psychology minor. If the student switches to a psychology major the waiver will become void.
5. Unusual cases that do not fit the above circumstances will be dealt with on an individual basis by the Psychology Department chair or his/her representative.
6. There will be a two-year grace period beginning with the fall 2006 semester during which students who have completed 3-credit psychology methods courses in other institutions prior to August 2006, or for whom psychology is a second major and have completed an acceptable methods course in their (first) major prior to August 2006, will have current practices regarding transfer credit and/or waiver of the PSH 301 requirement apply.

With regard to **PSH 322**, the issue is simpler. It is an *extremely* rare case where students wish to transfer such a course from another institution. Any such cases will be dealt with by the Psychology Department chair on an individual basis. No course normally will be accepted as equivalent to PSH 322 if it is not a 4-credit course with lab; 3-credit courses dealing with similar issues generally will transfer as 300-level psychology electives.